

MAD AS A HATTER!



A LUTON TOWN FANZINE

MOVING ON



"All right lads, stop posing and jump in, and we'll get you shipped out to your new clubs."

MAD AS A HATTER!



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Editorial

The editorial in our last issue was, to say the least, despondent. At the time we thought things could only improve, so we tried not to be too scathing in our criticism. Events since early September have proved us comprehensively wrong.

Continuing sales of players, on the basis of "an offer we couldn't refuse" and keeping Barclays Bank happy are sounding increasingly like lame excuses and we can only speculate that someone is pulling the wool over our eyes. Nelkin and Kohler, when they took over, said they had to reduce the clubs wage bill to survive on the gates the club was getting, yet a year later we are told the club is losing £15,000 a week. This suggests that these two smart business men are not so clever.

Of the players who have emerged into the first team this season, two have been sold already. Who will be next? Pembroke, Hughes, or Gray? It must only be a matter of time, and we can guarantee that the money won't be available to buy replacements. Carry on at this rate and we won't have a second division side by the time we get relegated. And speaking of relegation. The second coming of the messiah has not been an unqualified success has it? Allegedly brought in to avert the end of season relegation battle, this may yet be self-fulfilling prophecy with a battle being out of the question by not long after Christmas.

All in all the protest after the Sheffield Wednesday game was no surprise, given the provocation of three players sold in one week, and the bleating from Kohler that followed the protest can only serve to enforce the supporters dislike and distrust of him. If he really wants to know how to run a first division club on third division gates he should ask Sam Hamman. Wimbledon would love our gates. But the protests will inevitably continue and should do until Kohler gets the message and gets out, making way for someone with the interests of Luton Town, as a first division club, at heart. We cannot condone the sort of actions that led to the resignation of Nelkin although we would be the first to welcome a similar result.

When that happens, with a bit of luck and a following wind we may at last be able to

"ALWAYS LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE OF LIFE!"

Return to Normality

Saturday, 24th August 1991 was a significant day for Luton Town Football Club. Whatever happens over the course of this season (and that certainly doesn't bear thinking about for too long) nothing can take away the unbridled RELIEF felt at the return to Kenilworth Road of something approaching normality.

The Opening Day. The sun was shining down on Bury Park as I got off the bus and heard the first of many "got any spare tickets mate?" in distinct scouse tones. This is it, I thought. For the paranoid citizens of peaceful South Bedfordshire the awful day had arrived. Batten down the hatches, close the pubs, surround the Arndale Centre with troops, lock up your daughters and send the little 'uns away to stay with Auntie Edna. AWAY SUPPORTERS ARE BACK! And I for one am delighted.

From a far away northern land they came, dressed in their shirts of red, some in shirts of green (green?), singing their songs in accents strange: "shitty ground, shitty ground, shitty ground." Well yes I suppose they did have a point there but at least our home was now looking like a completed 4th Division ground with new seats filling the space previously occupied by that funny white building.

Surprisingly the Souness tribe didn't quite manage to fill the Oak Road end - from the Main Stand you could quite clearly make out a number of empty seats - and I wondered what became of the considerable number outside who were obviously ticketless. Also surprising was the relative lack of noise in the ground emanating from either set of supporters. There wasn't really a peep out of the Kenilworth Road end until the match was well and truly under way. Understandable I suppose, given the trepidation I know most of us felt at the dawning of this season - a season prefaced by a series of events comparable only to recent developments in the Soviet Union. Okay, maybe a slight exaggeration but I bet Gorby and our man Ryan could swap a few "stabbed in the back" anecdotes over a quiet vodka or two.

As for the famous Roar of the Kop, this seemed to only manifest itself to any extent when Liverpool got within a yard or two of our penalty area. Then, Chamberlain afterwards admitted, the noise made it difficult to convey instructions to the defence. Lets be honest, these days not

even the dulcet tones of Les "fog horn tonsils" Sealey would be able to get through to our defence, who are deservedly becoming the butt of many a football journalist's quip. In any case I'm sure we can expect a bit more of a racket when we entertain our friends from Leeds and Chelsea.

Yes it was certainly good to have away supporters back in the ground on a day when the return to normality also meant REAL GRASS! "What's that funny green stuff our Dad?" many a Junior Hatter was heard to enquire. "That son, is what we used to play football on in the old days" replied many a misty eyed father. "Tell me about the old days our Dad." "Well there was this fella see, name of Rioch"

From a distance the new surface did look quite promising on this its first outing. Closer inspection however revealed that rather than being lush the grass was more like David Preece's hair - sparse but spikey. Certainly the long grass (apparently necessary in the early stages of a new grass surface) significantly affected the play - it couldn't have provided a bigger contrast to the behaviour of the drastic plastic. Little lads like Pembridge and Preece appeared to be up to their knees in a neglected meadow as they waded across midfield.

And what of the old pitch? In a desperate attempt at securing more funds to buy some out of favour, clapped out workhorse to "strengthen" the playing staff we are being asked to part with a tenner for a square inch of the stuff in a little frame. I would imagine the demand for these awe inspiring items of memorabilia down at the souvenir shop has been totally underwhelming. Still you've got to admire the imagination of these marketing people.

A 0-0 result on this momentous day was, I guess, quite satisfying against such revered opposition. The early departure of MacMahon should of course had been exploited effectively but if Graham Rodger hadn't have stretched a leg to loop away an apparently certain Liverpool goal we would have come away with nowt.

Most importantly the game marked the end of the Evans Era and hopefully an end to our role as the lepers of the first division. I would rather be mocked for our inabilities on the pitch than scorned for our policies off it. Welcome back.

Lee Grave

Happy Returns



Amidst all the sales it gives us some pleasure to welcome Ceri Hughes back into the team. Let's hope that other managers can resist the temptation to make an offer we can't refuse.

View from the New Stand

Over the last 23 years I have (in chronological order) sat in the Wing Stand (the old name for the Oak Road end of the Main Stand), stood in the Bobbers (never sat there though), the Oak Road, various parts of the Maple Road Enclosure, the Kenilworth Terrace (before segregation) and sat in various parts of the Main Stand. In more recent years I have sat in the newly seated Maple Enclosure, stood in the Kenilworth Terrace and even sat in the new seats at the front for the first game this season. Clearly then the temptation to sit at least once in the imaginatively titled "New Stand" was too great for me to bear. At £13.50 a seat it probably won't develop into a habit! Or will it? Now read on ...

The day, 28 September, the weather, wet, the opposition, inspiring. Well, no, it was Notts County actually. The game those of you there will recall, except perhaps the first half because nothing happened. I understand that some London education authorities are practising the principle of non-competitive sport at school. Here were two sides obviously giving us a demonstration but at least the lack of action on the field gave me time to survey the surroundings.

The oddest thing was the complete absence of pillars in the way. OK further along there's a floodlight pillar but it wasn't in my way so tough! Sitting at the Kenilworth end of the New Stand the only obscured part was right by the corner flag, apart from that the view was a perfect as you could get at a football match. Perfect enough to see that it wasn't a penalty when Nogan went down - if the ref had given us one I wouldn't have complained mind but the 'bastard in the black' was right. Perfect enough to see that Gray was obstructed in the box, the 'BitB' was wrong!

And then there's the new sponsors logo on the shirts - I don't know what the general view is but I actually like the new kit and the logo sits quite well on it but is it not a telling point that where as we used to be sponsored by a company that made cars we are now sponsored by one that salvages them. Recession? What recession? And whilst we should be grateful for any crumbs that are thrown us by the sponsor does the club have to accept advertising that drags us back to the days when a woman's place was at home cooking

the tea rather than coming to the match - I thought companies realised by now that the use of scantily clad women to advertise cars etc is distasteful and unnecessary. That gripe over I wonder what else is in it for USA - first refusal on the scrap metal in the stand when we go bankrupt after relegation to the Diadora League? Or perhaps planning permission to use the ground as a vehicle pound?

But I digress: what of the New Stand? Well, it must have taken them minutes to think up the name - why couldn't they have named after an old player or manager (The Jim Ryan Stand?). It's a good stand though and a good addition to the ground - I've said it before and I'll say it forever - I love the ground and I don't ever want us to leave - it may be small, it may be cramped but given the choice between this and a new 'MFI' ground on the edge of town I know what I want. If we need to expand couldn't we build the Kenilworth stand back over that concreted area between the turnstiles and the road? But then why expand - we can't fill the ground as it is and I think that the FA have dropped the Premier League minimum capacity criterion. Yet again I digress, so let me stop now and say 'yes, the New Stand is not a bad little place.'

And if you lot who were 'singing' (I use the word in it loosest sense) at the back of the New Stand are reading this I hope you don't mind if I tell you that you were a little on the tuneless side. And if you want me to teach you the words to some of the songs just ask, they don't all go 'la la la'.

The Expatriate

We must offer our apologies to Murray Craig for failing to credit him with setting the quiz in issue 6, and providing the answers in issue 7. Honest chap didn't even take advantage of our error and enter it!

The Shirt Fiasco

Friday the 13th! Something was bound to go wrong. I knew it as soon as I heard that was when the new replica shirts would be available. In spite of my reservations I placed my order along with £28.00, at the club shop. Rather than tempt providence, however, I left it until Saturday 14th to go and collect the goods. This was when my worst fears came true. "Not on sale," I was told, "'cause we've got a sponsor." Fortunately, due to some good information from a friend, I was into the car and parking on a yellow line at the back of the Arndale, before you could Universal Salvage Auctions! It was then into Pete Sports, another £28.00 and I'm the proud possessor of a shirt the same as that worn by the team, along with several hundred other people.

Now I clearly got what I wanted, and as you couldn't get a shirt anywhere within a couple of days so did plenty of other people as well, so why am I complaining? Well the whole episode brings up some questions. Firstly, why was the season nearly a month old before the shirts were available? Were the club waiting for a sponsor or did they leave the ordering late? Was it a cock-up by Umbro? (*Definitely not, I'm assured - Ed.*) Secondly, and more important, why is there an assumption that we want to wear the sponsors name/logo across our chests? We don't. But we know the club think we do because Bill Tomlin told the Soccerline on 23rd September that many supporters would be disappointed at having shirts without the sponsors logo on. So convinced was he that the club will offer to put the logo on the shirts for you if your supplier refused! Not that this is a big problem as Bill said there were only "about 24" shirts sold in this "unsponsored" condition! Wrong on both counts, Bill. Many of the people (hundreds from what I've seen) who got their shirts are glad they haven't got the 'USA' logo and made the effort to get them to avoid it, and the retailers who sold them did so because of a little thing called cash, something we know Luton Town can't handle very well, and so wouldn't understand. But most important many of us would like to show our allegiance without having to advertise purveyors of new, second-hand or wrecked cars, and would be willing dare I say it, to pay a little (3 or 4 quid) extra for that opportunity. Perhaps we should be given that opportunity next time the club bring in a new kit, though hopefully that won't be for a few years yet.

K.F.H.

Twin Swoop

Harassed Hatters boss David Pleat today announced a twin swoop into the transfer market in a determined attempt to pep up the flagging fortunes of the Town. Pleat announced concern at the Hatters dismal attacking record, which recently extended to six hours forty seven minutes without a goal - and worry at the leaky defence. Pleat went on to say that Luton cannot afford Harrods' prices or even Sainsburys, in fact Patel's Mini-Mart is a bit expensive so he is delighted to sign the Futchers twins, Ron and Paul, from Crewe and Halifax respectively on free transfers. 'They will add vital maturity and experience to a youthful team, the young boys Stein and Peake can learn from two such seasoned pro's' said Pleat. 'They are only 35, remember that they started playing at 16'.

Ron, a prolific goalscorer, said he has learnt how to sniff out goals by playing for clubs of the calibre of Chester, Minnesota Kicks, Barnsley, Portland Timbers, Oldham Athletic, NAC Breda, Bradford City, Tulsa, Port Vale and Burnley. He said 'I have slowed down a little since my previous spell at the club from 1974-77 but the old football brain is still mentally alert and besides the young lad Stein can do the leg work for me'.

Paul is equally delighted to be back with Luton. He is particularly excited to be working in tandem with David Pleat who he regards as a highly talented manager. 'Things went wrong for me when I left Luton for Manchester City, I was a regular in the England Under 21 team and hoped to be capped at full level but playing for the eccentric Malcom Alison did my prospects no end of harm'. Paul is still optimistic about his England chances saying that you are as young as you feel and that he trains hard for ten minutes every other day and that he is confident of his ability to beat Trevor Peake in the 50 yard bath chair sprint.

Finally on the transfer front David Pleat denied rumours linking him with another ex-Hatter. St. Albans City want a fee of £50 for 36 year old Paul Price, 'far too much in the current economic climate' commented Pleat 'and besides he is still a boy learning the game and I want the older, more experienced players to fulfil the elder statesman role'.

Hughie Billington



Ron and Paul Futchers, as seen here in 1977-78.

COMPETITION TIME

Once again its competition time, but no questions to answer for this one. We need your help. The "Mad as a Hatter!" Christmas tree will be going up shortly (yes it is that time of year again) and we want your suggestions for decorations and gifts. Who should play the fairy on top of the tree? Should Mickey Mouse get a David Kohler watch for Xmas? Get the idea? Good. A "Mad" Xmas pack to both of you if entries are up to the usual standard. All suggestions to the usual address please.

Anything in Reserve?

I had never been to a reserve match before, not in all my 20+ years of watching football, so it was a new, enriching and decidedly character building experience when I entered Portman Road at 3pm on a hot sunny Wednesday 28 August for Ipswich Res v Luton Res! No, I am not completely mad, I don't normally travel to away reserve games! I live near Ipswich, that's my excuse!

The first feeling was one of unreality, walking to the ground with no milling crowds, no police, no programmes, no fanzines, not even any queues for the toilets! Entering the ground, with just a typed out team sheet there was a pick of the best seats in the house. The music was classical, not the latest pop, reminding me of the old days when the only thing that ever got played before the games at Kenilworth Road was a brass band record, and it got played again and again and again ...

Well, what of the match? Well the result of 3-0 to Ipswich was disappointing but not surprising. Luton have a very young, almost youth second team and no where near the depth of players that Ipswich have. Many of the Ipswich team have first team experience and when injuries strike they will have cover for the first team. Liverpool have showed how important that is, with their early season games being won with virtually a second XI. If we get injuries then, well, we're in the s*** frankly.

The Luton team was: Summer, Jackson, Gillard, James (capt.), Campbell, Allpress, Rees, Nogan, Farrell, Telfer, Harvey with Tighe and Williams as subs. As the game began one of the most noticeable things was that the players' shouts were louder than the crowds' (about 300 I think). The Ipswich team were much faster to the ball and steadier in defence with Wark bringing a very calm, experienced head to bear at the back (he's back as a temporary contract player at Ipswich). Ipswich attacked well on the right wing to bring early saves out of the brave Luton keeper (Summer) who insisted on diving straight at feet with no concern for skull fractures! Yet it was a cock up in defence (just like the first team!) that gave Ipswich the first goal with Gregory shooting low and just wide of the keeper to score off the

left post after 6 minutes. Another goal was added at 30 minutes by Gregory with a close range shot after another defensive mess up. The only two attacking moves in this half for us were a 10 yard shot wide by Nogan after 40 minutes and, just before half time, a cross by Gillard which turned into a lob over the keeper and was tipped onto the bar.

In the second half Ipswich continued to dominate with Milton scoring after 70 minutes with a cracking first time volley from 10 yards to make it 3-0. After this Ipswich eased up and nearly let us back in but still we couldn't score. Telfer sent over a good fast cross from the right but no-one was there to meet it, Nogan slipped a back heel to Harvey who crossed well but there was no-one to meet it (there's a pattern here somewhere), Rees controlled well but shot over from 20 yards and Nogan and Telfer combined well in the box, turning and hitting a good shot which was tipped onto the post by the Ipswich keeper. Towards the end Ipswich could have added another couple though with Campbell hooking the ball off the line and over the bar and then an overhead kick from an Ipswich sub, 10 yards out and only just over the bar.

In conclusion the game confirmed what I suspected, an alarming lack of depth in the Luton ranks, a very inexperienced and young side with few of them really looking like first division material. The best player was in the one position we're OK in, the goalkeeper: Juergen Summer was quick, brave and only made one minor mistake all the game, so at least Chamberlain's got good cover. In central defence Jamie Campbell looked sharp and could make it into the first team one day. All in all though it was a very open and entertaining game with both sides playing good passing football, well worth a couple of quid - if you've got nothing better to do try it out one day.

The Expatriate

6.30pm FILM The Beast of Hollow Mountain

After finding his cattle slaughtered, rancher Jimmy Ryan decides to investigate the myth of the monster of the mountain — and makes a hair-raising discovery.

See Films, starting page 9

That buggar Nelkin
just won't leave
our Jim alone.

Commercially Speaking

LUTON TOWN - Top of the table when it comes to commercial acumen and public relations as the following all serve to illustrate:

1. No lucrative sponsorship deal at the beginning of the season an achievement shared only by our rivals in the popularity stakes - Wimbledon.
2. Calling our startling new piece of stadium architecture 'The New Stand' - highly original! Surely it could be named in memory of a distinguished figure from the club's past say Eric Morecambe or Harry Haslam.
3. Having the main Souvenir Shop closed on Match Days - a sharp piece of business sense this one. There is a branch of the shop in Kenilworth Road but it has only a limited range of goods available. Surely the peak trading time is match days not midweek when people cannot get to the ground.
4. Not having our ghastly new day-glo kit available for the start of the season is probably a good idea as it is an affront to peoples' eyesight. I am probably an old reactionary but I am in favour of a return to the good old days and the simple kit of black shorts and white shirts. Anyway traditional style strips are now high fashion items. However, surprisingly lots of people want to spend thirty pounds on these monstrosities. *(Like most of us at Mad - Ed.)*

The commercial folly was heightened when the shirts arrived in time for the Oldham game but were then withdrawn from sale to allow the name of our new prestigious sponsors to be emblazoned across their fronts. The Sports Shop on the Dunstable Road made a killing here selling out their entire stock on the day.

5. Charging away fans £13.50 makes good commercial sense but will not win any new friends and in fact probably

deters visitors from attending as can be seen from the empty seats at the Liverpool and Oldham games. (I have not included the Southampton fixture as that was a midweek game.)

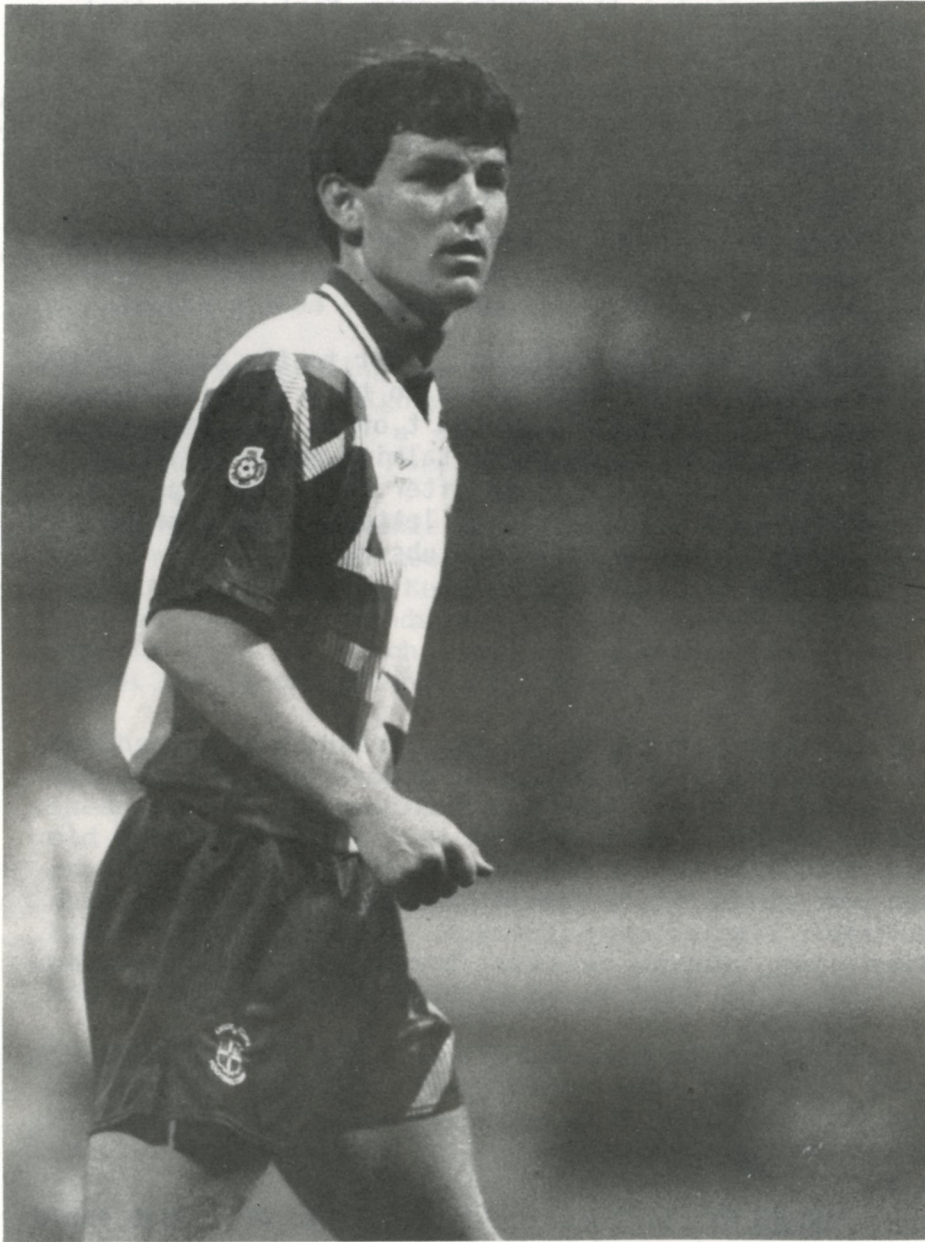
There is a real North/South divide here, it only cost £7 to sit in the away end at Goodison and the view from their stand is positively panoramic in comparison to the bunker like outlook in the Oak Road.

"Hughie Billington"

Speaking of commercial matters, prior to the start of the current season we at "Mad" wrote to the club with an offer of sponsorship. Now while we can't offer the same as your average big business, we were talking about a five figure sum of money (including those after the decimal point). As we forgot to take a copy of our letter we can't print it here. But we can show you the clubs reply.

There, thats it. We know its difficult to read, but for a club thats so short of money we found it disappointing to say the least.

THE 74 MINUTE MAN



Pictured here is Lee Glover who should have appeared on the back cover of issue 7. As we predicted Lee has now returned to Nottingham Forest.

UnReasonable Absence

Paul Telfer has made his debut. Ceri Hughes has returned from injury. Steve Thompson has arrived and done Well, not much really apart from giving away a couple of soft goals. McDonough even managed enough games to get another injury. And yet Jason Rees has been spending his time playing at Creasey Park and other exotic high spots of the Football Combination. WHY?

Jason's fast and hard (if sometimes over zealous) style is desperately needed in the first team. Pace is all important, proved by the fact that more than half the Town goals have been scored when Nogan has been on the pitch, and a bit of hard and fast tackling at the back of midfield might work wonders. If Jason has fallen out with D. Pleat, then it is time that all was forgiven, if they haven't fallen out then it can only be a matter of time before they do. Jason must be given a chance, even as a sub he would be better than a sadly out of touch Brian Stein.

A.G.F.C.



FOOTBALL SUPPORTERS AGAINST MS

This season the whole of football will come together to help
raise funds for
ACTION AND RESEARCH AGAINST MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

Funds will be raised through the staging of :

**A National Walk to all
English and Scottish league grounds
Supporters Matches
Collections
Parties/ discos and barbecues
Match of my Life book
It's Twelve Inches High... fanzine compilation
A National Raffle**

Plus other events too numerous to mention

For further information contact
FAMS at 4a Chapel Hill, Stanstead, Essex
or watch out for further details that will appear just about
everywhere.

**Don't miss the FSA fanzine compilation
"It's Twelve Inches High..."
due out on sale before Christmas**

ARMS Registered Charity No : 268899 Registered Company No : 1196338



FOOTBALL SUPPORTERS AGAINST MS



The footballing world is joining forces for the biggest charity initiative in the history of the game. "Football Against MS", aims to raise £3.5 Million in support for Action and Research for Multiple Sclerosis (ARMS) and will involve everybody at all levels within the game.

Football Against MS already has the support of League clubs in England, Scotland and Wales, the governing bodies, and supporters groups within the game. It will encompass numerous events taking place between September 1991 and May 1992.

The focal point will be three simultaneous walks visiting every League club, plus some non-league clubs along the way in England, Scotland and Wales. Players, staff and celebrities will walk between each club ground and supporters will be encouraged to raise money and walk with them.

Starting on 12th January, two of the walks will finish at Wembley Stadium during half time of the FA Cup Final, and the third will finish in Glasgow on Scottish FA Cup Final day.

The week 25th April to 2nd May has been designated "Football Against MS Week" when football orientated events will take place all over the country to raise funds for the cause.

Amongst the many things being done for FAMS are : National under 14 5-a-side competition with the finals at Wembley before the FA Cup Final, a woman's 5-a-side tournament, Two books - "The Match Of My Life" and a fanzine compilation by the Football Supporters Association called "It's Twelve Inches High... And It's Made of Solid Gold", Veteran matches where supporters will have the chance to play the "old" team of the club they support, collections, competitions and auctions of football memorabilia.

As well as helping ARMS the event will also put a substantial amount of money back into the game at all levels.

Multiple Sclerosis affects an estimated 100,000 people in Britain. It is a progressive disease with no known cause or cure.

Action and Research for Multiple sclerosis (ARMS) will use the money raised from "Football Against MS" to further research and assist with the practical management of the condition.

The FSA and this fanzine urge you to support this event and to get involved as much as you can.

Multiple Sclerosis can affect anybody - it is not hereditary. it can strike at anytime. It could affect someone you know - tomorrow

For further information contact ARMS at 4a Chapel Hill, Stanstead, Essex or watch out for details that will appear just about everywhere.

Better Leighton than never

Thursday 24 October, Bell Close, Leighton Buzzard.

Not exactly a familiar sounding venue, but definitely one for the record books. At last a Town team win an away game, and a cup match at that. Ok, so Leighton Town are no Liverpool, apart from their all-red strip that is, but the Luton Town team was not full of household names either. In fact only one recognisable player of first team experience and that was Paul Holsgrove, just given a free transfer. Tim Allpress, and one or two others fresh from the ZDS cup tie at Ipswich, aside this was a team of unknowns.

Bell Close as a football ground is compact but neat, with scruffy football. An uninspiring first half was followed by a mildly interesting second. The only goal came direct from a free kick on the edge of the 18 yard box, and was floated into the top right corner. Celebrations were muted and the crowd (about 400) prayed against an equaliser, so as to avoid further punishment. A scramble in Pettersons goalmouth caused a few white knuckles, but the day was saved. The final whistle, and Town have an away cup win and can now look toward round 2 of the Beds Premier Cup. I hope we get Barton Rovers. Dunstable is always too cold. As for the players on the night, Holsgrove was the best, and the worst? Well, lets just say that the number two slot looks a bit of a problem. Final word has to go to a member of the Mad editorial team, who, anticipating a last minute equaliser and injury time winner, wanted to call this piece The Late Leighton Show!

P.J. Smith

An Honest Mistake??

Luton's attempt to 'pull a fast one' was exclusively revealed to us by Howard Kendall. In the recent transfer involving Matthew Jackson, Luton apparently sent Trevor Peake instead in the vain hope that the toffeemen wouldn't notice. This hopeless plan soon came to light when Trevor was thrown a football to demonstrate his skills with. "I could tell straight away it was a trick" said Howard "He's far too skilful and quick on the ball to play for us, and anyway, I'd expect to pay at least £1 million for a player of his pedigree!!

Frank Lee Pistoff

Strange but True

NUMBER 2 - THE RADIO CONTROLLED FOOTBALL

I think it was against Chelsea on 20th April 1982. We drew 2-2 but it's one of the Chelsea goals I can remember. The ball was lobbed up high and was clearly sailing into the Kenilworth terrace, Jake Findlay was watching the ball safely over when suddenly it dipped, fell a few feet, then straightened up again and slipped under the crossbar with a bemused Town defence staring around in utter confusion. Even the scorer (can't remember who) couldn't believe it. The ball was inspected by all but no, it hadn't burst. I know all this happened because I was right behind the trajectory of the ball. Perhaps I've got the wrong game but I shall never forget the goal.

The Expatriate

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

A bit of advance notice that we here at Mad are planning a party to "celebrate" the Reserves' last game at Creasey Park on 27th January against QPR. We are of course hoping that the hero of the 6-1 defeat at Loftus Road will be there, for it is he who we are planning to honour in the first

"MR SPOONS PARTY".

Yes, hopefully the great man himself (that's Tony Roberts for those of you who weren't there) will be putting in an appearance.

So, if you're going to be there bring a spoon and make it a night to remember!!

WATCH THIS SPACE FOR FURTHER DETAILS!!!

Where Cold Winds Blow

Sounds more like a title to a novel doesn't it. This article is however about the present home of Luton's reserve team and if you've been along there on a Monday night I'm sure you'll know what I mean.

So, apart from a climate more suited to penguins, what does Creasey Park have to offer the football connoisseur? For a start you can stand shoulder to shoulder with Luton players - firstly some injured players who wish they were playing but more importantly some first team players who probably should be playing. For those of you who like a gamble watch out for the half time raffle as drawn by the referee! Whilst on the subject of half time, refreshments that would put most league clubs to shame are available including pretty good bacon rolls. The half time announcements from Harold Stew are well worth a listen. A future employee at Luton maybe? After the match, refreshment in liquid form can be obtained from the club house offering cheap prices and the added bonus is that there isn't a Whitbread beer in sight.

On the playing front Jason Rees continues to put in performances that must surely lead to a first team call-up. Apart from that we win some, lose some and concede the odd early goal.

Sounds interesting? Well come along and find out for yourself. After all, surely you can tear yourself away from the armchair and dose of soaps once in a while.

P.I.

**POLO PONIES 'COST £250
EACH WEEK'**

Even cheaper than donkeys!

Town Directors Best - Official!

A recent survey of the 92 (pre-Barnet) Football League Club boardrooms has surprisingly placed Luton Town top of the list. The survey, conducted by MORI* revealed that Luton chairmen have the highest IQ in the country. Messrs Evans, Cole, Smith, Nelkin and Smith (again) gave the club number one spot in the table for the unique "I Quit" (IQ) rating. The result, whilst never in much doubt, was swung by current incumbent Roger Smith's willingness to stand down in favour of a more willing occupant, this being taken as an advance "I Quit". The survey also pointed out that it was an unusual turnabout that at Luton managers generally outlasted the chairmen who appointed them, with 4 of the last 6 managers achieving this feat. It would appear then, the survey says, that the managers best hope of continuing employment is to keep the chairman in place, especially if he has already sacked a manager, as at Luton they rarely last long enough to sack two!

K.F.H.

*MORI - More Outrageous Results Incorporated

TAYLOR MADE

Cast your minds back to April 1984 - Luton v W*****d. A young, but very promising Luton centre-half and the W*****d captain are involved in a scuffle. Both are sent off - the W*****d player misses their FA Cup Final appearance because of the suspension (shame - if Will had played they'd have lost by 4 or 5). The promising young centre-half has now matured and is earning rave reviews in the press, yet still awaits an international call-up whilst lesser, but ex-Watford players (yes, I'm talking about Richard Jobson - who?) are called in.

Well, can you think of any other reason why Paul Elliott hasn't played for England yet?

JOCKSPOT

Firstly, a big thank you for the mammoth response to my plea in issue 7 for some Scottish "snippets", we managed to amass a grand total of one, so a big thanks to Stephen Fraser of Bathgate, West Lothian. If we at Luton feel utterly 'slagged off' about the current state of our beloved club then spare a thought for Meadowbank Thistle. If we think that watching Luton is an ordeal then remember there is always someone worse off.

Mr. Fraser states that 'Thistle' have held onto their First Division status for a good few years, so what!, you may be saying, but on gates of 2 or 3 hundred or less and a part-time side with a 44 match league programme, that is nothing short of miraculous. A mega-crowd of 171 versus Forfar for a midweek game puts things into perspective doesn't it.

Edinburgh may not be the footballing capital of the UK but Hibs and Hearts are both having good season's, which must make Meadowbanks' financial status all the more vulnerable. Only a season or two ago only Hamilton Accies stood between Thistle and promotion to the Premier League. They may have come straight back down again but financially it would have been a real "spin off". As it is, they struggle, like ourselves, on a week to week basis.

Talking of struggling. Scotland's representatives in Europe haven't exactly done themselves proud. Motherwell, Aberdeen, Celtic and Rangers have all been eliminated in what quite honestly has not done Scottish footballs reputation much good at all. But then again, the more letters I receive the less depressing news will be expressed in this column.

We hear that Wimbledon have signed, on loan, a number of London Transport guards to act as stewards at Selhurst Park. Why? Well, when spectators come onto the terraces, they are instructed to "Mind The Gap".....

TOWN TRAVELS

16.11.91 TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR PLC

Hopefully not a rerun of David Ellerays greatest match, but that just means there will probably be less of interest for Town fans. As for the beer, rail travellers could do worse than try the SKINNERS ARMS, 114 Judd Street, a Greene King pub, a short walk from St. Pancras. The motorists amongst you could try one of the J.D. Wetherspoons chain of free houses such as THE ELBOW ROOM, 503 Tottenham High Road, or THE BOAR, 413 Lordship Lane, N17. But remember don't drink and drive.

30.11.91 SHEFFIELD UNITED

The proverbial relegation 6 pointer, even in November. Fairly good drinking area. Try MOSELEYS ARMS, 81 West Bar, a Stones pub a mere stones throw from the pig sty, oops! police station. The ROYAL STANDARD, 156 St. Marys Road (Wards) is an old favourite near the ground, if all else fails.

15.12.91 CRYSTAL PALACE

Yet again a Sunday afternoon at Selhurst Park, and with our record there probably not worth going. Anyone travelling should visit the PRINCE OF DENMARK, 152 Portland Road, SE25 (at Norwood Junction Station) for stiff drink prior to the massacre, sorry match.

When the First Division programme was cancelled recently, a number of Wimbledon supporters were offered free tickets to watch Wycombe Wanderers, but they refused. Why? Well, they couldn't stand the crowd.....

Talking Crap

Those of you who read the letters page may just have noticed my name before. The rest of you will probably stop reading this page as well. This could be the start of a regular page, if all goes well, but I don't plan on going on about how the team are playing as we could all do that endlessly, although in passing I must say what a good result we got on 12th October. A performance that was exactly what the supporters expected. Brilliant.

But on to more serious matters. Soccerline, 0839 664466 (something extortionate per minute etc...) is the easiest way of keeping in touch with everything happening at your club. What? Gossipline more like, with all the non-news about what isn't happening. The main diet is match reports by Brian "Surely" Swain, variations also found in the Luton News and on Chiltern Radio (is this a case for the Monopolies Commission?), and interviews with David Pleat.

Now I don't get to many away games, due to having to look after an ageing mother, and the only place you can get a match report is on Soccerline (the Sunday papers having given us up as a lost cause). Credit where its due, the reports B.S. gives are thorough and give all the facts, but not once this season has a Luton player had a crap game (or words to that effect). People who have been on the terraces will tell you we were lucky to get nil and that 12 of the 11 players should be dropped immediately. B.S. meanwhile says so and so made a mistake (by turning up!?) or the defence didn't cover well. The day B.S. tells us that ***** (no names please, Eds) is to football what Saddam Hussein is to diplomacy I will probably faint.

As for the interviews with D.P. I am seriously tempted to wonder if we're dealing with a missing bag of marbles. Every defeat is not really as many goals as were conceded, and has encouraging points which "the true supporters, the faithful" will have seen. Anyone who thinks the team were crap is obviously not a true supporter! On the contrary, Mr. Pleat, anyone travelling to see Luton away must be a true supporter, or a genuine masochist. From what I've heard and seen there certainly isn't much fun involved. On other matters D.P. is

beginning to sound somewhat Clough-ish, in that he is the only person able to see and understand what is happening on the pitch. Everything he does, he said after the Kingsley Black transfer, is for the good of the club, and if its good for the club it must be for the good of the supporters. I may not have got the words spot on, but that is the gist of it. I could go on and on, but whats the point?

The point is that Soccerline is OK for straightforward information (scores, scorers, etc.) but crap (*This is where the title comes in? We thought he was referring to himself - Eds.*) if your looking for anything deeper. It is a PR exercise packed with good news, much like the match programme, and about as expensive. But still I ring it, if only for the laughs.

To wind up I have just heard Swain doing a report on the reserves game at Spurs in which he referred to "Kurt Nogans blundering ability ...". At least I think thats what he said. Is this what I've been waiting for? Honesty at last?

P.J. Smith

FOR YOUR EYES ONLY

Due to our friend and supplier Honest John of Camden Market, we are now in a position to offer you, our readers, an exclusive offer of a lifetime. Rose tinted spectacles as worn by messrs. Pleat and Murphy.

If you're pissed off with awful away performances ending in heavy defeats, these are just the thing for you. Suddenly you too will be able to see promising signs in 5-0 defeats that weren't really 5-0 after all. You may even go to a press conference afterwards stating how well we played.

So you dont believe me eh! Well I tried them for the first time against Sheffield Wednesday and left the ground thinking we won 6-2 thanks to a late John Dreyer hat-trick!

For your pair of these special spectacles please send £8.50 to Honest John, c/o Cloud Cuckoo Land, Near Camden Market, London. Please note as with everything else nowadays these are not available on the N.H.S.

Raving Mad!!!

Dear "Mad",

I was most surprised to see the letter in the last issue regarding the facilities at the Kenilworth Road end.

The toilet facilities are the best planning to be organised by the club for many years. I speak as a fan who first saw the Town against Preston North End in Division 1 in 1958/9.

Firstly the club has purposely organised long queues at half time so that the banter amongst the fans makes up for the lack of entertainment on the pitch and if you are lucky enough to be at the back you miss a fair chunk of the second half. Take the QPR match didn't you wish you were at the back of the queue.

Now the really brilliant bit of planning is in the height of the urinals. You maybe 5ft 8in, like me, and have to stand on tiptoe to go but you have missed the point as well as the urinal. Take a look at the height of Gray, Glover, Stein, Pembridge and Preece and you will see that the urinals have been set at the perfect height. The idea is that after watching 90 minutes of crap, no not in the urinals, dished up by Dreyer and McDonough in defence the players mentioned can puke into the trough without needing to bend. Don't those two make you want to puke.

I trust this observation will help you to see the board in a new light. Hopefully their next plan is to sell Dreyer and McDonough to Watford and then the Hornets will visit Division 3.

Regards,

Ron Hedley

High Wycombe, Bucks.

P.S. Pembridge's performances are making me puke.

Dear "Mad",

Firstly to P.J. Smith - you weren't forced into the Kenilworth seats, and certainly not by away supporters! You could have stood like the rest of us!! If you care to look behind you we're still here!!!

Secondly - after the stunning performance against QPR, when all Town players were at least two paces slower than their "super hooped" counterparts D. Pleat was reported (on Soccerline 0839 664466) as saying "he was delighted by their (the teams) energy." If we are gauging "energy" against

geriatric spastics, yes, they did give some delight - unfortunately this was the English 1st division!!!

Thirdly - (boy can I count!) Mr Pleat denigrates the crowd for urging the team to get the ball into the opposition box (penalty I think!) - how are we to score if we don't. With this philosophy - the current - 12 goal difference looks like increasing and home matches against Watford and the Bristol bore's look likely in 1991-93 season.

Yours"d.pressed"

Paul Devall

Flitwick, Beds.

Dear "Mad",

I think P.J. Smith is absolutely right in everything he says and is a very sound and sensible young man.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. Ada Smith (Age 72)

Leighton Buzzard

Dear "Mad",

I'm unfortunate enough to sit next to P.J. Smith and I agree with the rest of you, he does speak a load of b****cks. Strange though he's a fat bald man who wears a blue rosette. It couldn't be could it?

Yours sincerely,

The Man Who Preece Hits Every

Time He Bloody Shoots!

Dear "Mad",

When Vinny Jones moved to Chelsea, David Pleat said he felt that £650,000 was too much money to pay for a long throw expert. I think he missed the point.

Vinny Jones is worth having in a team not for any outstanding footballing ability, but for his sheer enthusiasm, and the fighting spirit and self belief he spreads through any team he plays for. These are qualities which Luton Town are sadly lacking at the moment. OK so his mouth sometimes hits top gear before the brain is engaged but usually he's only saying what real supporters think. The man thinks of football as a supporter, which is why teams he plays for don't lay down and die, like Luton do away from home at the moment. I wish David Pleat had signed him.

Regards

K. Dickson

Dunstable

Ed: *Whatever one's thoughts about young Vincent, he certainly hit the nail on the head about Palace.*

Dear "Mad",
Your excellent publications continue. Forceful but well reasoned and fair. The latest one is very well presented; good quality and clear typeface and paper, which does make a difference to professionalism of presentation. I could have sworn, however, that John Dreyer's picture, rather than Lee Glovers, appears on the back of issue 7. Keep up the good work. I no longer buy the club programme, at £1.50 it is just a complete waste of money. Yours could become an epic.
Yours sincerely,
Bryan Collins
Harpenden, Herts.

Eds: Spot on Bryan, we couldn't palm off Tumble as Lee Glover, but as an attempt to fool, Cloughie it had to be worth a try!
For the benefit of our readers we must stress that all of this letter is genuine - embarrassing eh!

Dear "Mad",
I was amazed, when one of the lads at work thrust a copy of "Mad as a Hatter" fanzine in front of me and I found myself reading about A Misunderstood Genius. I have been called a few things in my time but a Genius. Surely could this balding 52 year old humble cartoonist (spare time) be a Genius? Such kind words indeed, or do I detect a slight anyway I'm alive and well, living but a stones throw from the Town ground (on a clear day you can see Millwall fans throwing stand seats).
Was it really 11 years since my last cartoon? I suppose it would be no use telling you that I'd run out of ink, I'd hung up my pen to help in the search for Lord Lucan, or that I sent it second class and it probably hadn't arrived yet. Does your Editorial team's talents extend to psychic powers? Just last week I was in touch with the match day Magazine Editor to see if they were interested in using some topical gags, if they'll have me.
I'm back at the drawing board again after a lay-off. I could

have decorated a room with my rejection slips then my luck changed, 'Private Eye', 'Damage', 'Trout' and I won a few competitions.

Best wishes.

Pat Flood

Luton

P.S. Oh yes as I was saying the explanation for the absence of my cartoons in the 80's



PF

What do we want?



David Kohler, Towns managing director, is rumoured to be auditioning for the part of Del Trotter in a new BBC series of *Only Fools and Horses* after receiving his equity card for an unconvincing portrayal of a Luton Town supporter. What's more, he thinks "only a minority of people were involved in the shouting and yelling" after the game against Wednesday. Prove him wrong. What do we want?

KOHLER OUT